

A Bit Of Fate

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> Rating: PG (For no reason really, I just didn't think G is appropriate for anything Buffy)
 Summary: The product of a little hot weather and a whole lot of Willow/Oz angst

> Disclaimer: The usual; these character's are Joss'...wait, except the extras! Yes! those imaginary extras that you make up in your mind are MINE! All mine!!! *Wicked laugh* Yes...I have issues.
 A/N: This doesn't have anything to do with my last series!!! Written fairly late at night...Tell me what you think, it's not exactly original, but I kind of liked it.

> Without further ado...my story. Enjoy.

> Willow took a small sip of her tea and sighed. She looked out the large front window of the coffee shop, watching the people pass. They didn't look back...too hurried, too in need of somewhere that wasn't where they were...
 A man bumped into her table. She glanced up and all she saw was his shirt was red. He didn't say anything to her, not even a 'sorry', just went on his clumsy way. She shrugged it off instinctively, so used to being the invisible girl...woman. The ripples in her tea flowed slower and slower and disappeared. Just as she had seemed to.

> Outside the window, a woman her age tugged along a small child with sticky fingers and wild curls. Willow smiled a little sadly...barely a hint of that old highschool grin remained intact. She had matured in more ways than one, her face had thinned out, her hair was long and unstyled, flowing down her neck and licking her shoulder blades...and most of all, her soul had grown old.
 Sometimes, she would visit Buffy and Xander...watch their normal children run around the yard. Okay, normal children playing with dull pieces of wood they called stakes. Buffy would smile at her and say how well she looked and all those men who passed her by were obviously blind to look ignore a girl like her with a figure like her's. But they were empty words...sure she was happy to look younger than 30...wow, scary

age...30?...but during those visits, she couldn't help but wish that she could trade it all away just for an ounce of what Buffy and Xander had. Their family, typical suburban home, children...normalcy.

> Sure, she'd had a fair...small...extremely low share of men and women in her life. But that dwindled even more as the years went on. Sometimes, she'd wake and feel such...nothing inside...such emptiness that all she could do was lay there. She'd never had that gift that Buffy had...the ability to attract and keep men so easily and it just got worse as the years went on. She remembered once telling Buffy that all she need was a bit of fate. A bit of fate and a lot of love. Now she wondered if fate or love even existed for her. Each passing day, filled with pain and loneliness seemed to tick by so slowly...each passing day dragged her further and further down into despair.
 Sometimes, she'd think back to Tara...after college, they'd traded addresses, email screen names, phone numbers...but that list had remained in her desk drawer, untouched, unused. And Tara never tried to contact her either. Perhaps it was just as well...but at the same time it hurt.

> But it was Oz that remained a lingering pang in her heart. How many times had she thought of him? Sometimes there'd be nights where she'd stay awake, wondering why she'd let him go. But she'd tell herself everything was everything for a reason. It tore her up inside. She'd looked for him during those late nights and early mornings...racking the Internet files...checking everywhere he could be. But she found nothing.
 She stirred herself from her thoughts, looking around the coffee house and taking a self conscious sip of her drink. One of the waiters behind the counter gave her dirty look and upon checking her watch, she realized she'd been sitting at the table working on her cup of tea for nearly two hours. Quickly, she gathered her straw bag and cast aside knitting and headed out the door, letting the dirty-look waiter attack her table with a tray and soapy rag.

> It had began to rain lightly during her two hour cup of tea. The street outside was still crowded...a diverse group of people; workers with their cell phones and briefcases, bums with their beers, teens with headphones; all united in one goal...not being there. Except now they hurried even more. They all brushed past her without so much as a second glance. The lost woman with the unfinished angora sweater and straw bag.
 Reaching her apartment building, she searched through her purse for the old keys. The key ring caught on her knitting and she fumbled them. They fell onto the broken sidewalk with a clatter. Frowning, she clutched her bag and stooped to pick them up.

> Someone else's hand beat her to them. It was rough and gentle at the same time...she followed it with her eyes up an arm covered with the sleeve of a simple cotton shirt...up to the face of a man.
 "Need help?" he asked casually, handing her the keys with the air of a gentleman despite the clothes he wore.

> "Oz.," she breathed. Subconsciously, she reached a quivering hand out to touch him...make sure he was real...
 She drew back, feeling silly and lost as though living in a dream. But this was all real.

> "Hey," he replied, "you look good..." he did a quick one over, "still have the fuzzy sweaters, I see..." His voice was at it's usual monotone level but she sensed something shaking behind it.
 "Yeah well...somethings you just never let go of...no matter how hard you try..." she said, her voice oddly strangled. She wasn't talking about clothes.

> "I-I looked for you...but I never found you..." she finally blurted, not sure why, "all those late nights I spent up...I never

should've sent you away...but I had to. And I did. And I shouldn't take it back so why shou-"
She felt his hands upon her shoulders and she stopped, realizing her cheeks were wet. Reaching a hand up to her face, she felt tears. She was crying. For the first time in almost 10 years, she was really, genuinely crying. A deep sob erupted out of her and he drew her trembling body close to him, holding her protectively. She couldn't stop weeping, couldn't stop the tears, couldn't stop her knees from melting...

> All she wanted right now was this...him...
There was a distant rumble of thunder that came from somewhere that might've just as well been Nepal for all she cared. The rain pattered down harder upon them, but still he held her. And in his embrace she remained. After all the pain and hurt and turmoil...

> "I love you," he whispered in her ear, "I've loved you all this time..."
Tears and rain slid down her cheek onto his shoulder becoming one with the puddle that had already formed there.

> "We have a lot catching up to do," she managed to say. He held her closer and she felt him nod into her back. Neither of them moved, but rather remained in the middle of the crowded sidewalk, in the middle of that diverse crowd, holding each other. The people moving about them still hurried by but this time they all stopped to watch for just a split second. And she didn't care. Life had finally handed her what she'd waited for all these years. A bit of fate. A bit of fate and a lot of love.

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End
file.